

Message Text

PAGE 01 TEL AV 03045 200827Z

10

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 FEA-01 ERDA-05 AID-05 CEA-01

CIAE-00 CIEP-01 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-07 FPC-01 H-02

INR-07 INT-05 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-03

USIA-06 SAM-01 OES-03 SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00

FRB-03 PA-01 PRS-01 ACDA-05 NRC-05 /113 W

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INFO USMISSION IAEA VIENNA

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 3045

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: TGEN, IS

SUBJ: ISRAELI ENERGY PROGRAM

1. THE SCIENTIFIC & TECHNOLOGICAL ATTACHE MET WITH SHELHEVETH FRIER DG, ISRAEL ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION, AND MEMBERS OF HIS STAFF (TAVI, FOREIGN RELATIONS, DAVID PELEG, ADMIN OFFICER) ON MAY 1 FOR BRIEFING ON IAEC PLANS AND PROGRAMS. COINCIDENTLY BETWEEN TIME APPOINTMENT WAS MADE AND KEPT THE ISRAEL PRESS CITED THAT ON APRIL 27 THE ISRAELI CABINET HAD MADE DECISION TO HAVE A NUCLEAR POWER PLANT FUNCTIONING BY 1984 SO FOCUS OF MEETING SHIFTED TO THIS REPORT.

2. MR FRIER CONFIRMED THE REPORT WAS CORRECT ALTHOUGH HE STATED THE CABINET APPROVAL WAS IN PRINCIPLE AND A FINAL DECISION WILL AWAIT COMPLETION OF IAEC STUDY. HE BREAKS OUT THE STUDY INTO FOUR PARTS: A) SITE GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY; B) SITE HARDENING PROTECTION REQUIREMENTS TO CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 TEL AV 03045 200827Z

COUNTER TERRORISTS AND CONVENTIONAL WAR ACTIONS; C) ECONOMIC ANALYSIS AND D) RESOLUTION OF POLITICAL FACTORS, I.E., SAFEGUARDS. THE FIRST THREE PARTS ARE TO BE CONDUCTED CONCURRENTLY AND AT THE QUOTE

CRITICAL TIME UNQUOTE THE SAFEGUARDS ISSUE WILL BE VENTED. HE DID NOT WANT TO VENTURE A GUESS AS TO WHEN THAT TIME MIGHT BE AS IT WAS OF COURSE MORE OF A POLITICAL DECISION AND BESIDES THE PRESENT POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE DIDN'T NEED THE ADDITION OF MORE DIFFICULT ISSUES.

3. THE NITZANIM SITE IS STILL THE PRIMARY LOCATION FOR THE FIRST SYSTEM WITH A PLANNED CAPACITY OF 660 TO 800 MEGAWATTS. IAEC FORESEES 4-6 PLANTS BEING NEEDED BY ISRAEL BY TURN OF CENTURY. THEY ARE BEING ASSISTED BY TWO US CONSULTING FIRMS AND ALTHOUGH SPECIFICATIONS HAVE NOT BEEN COMPLETED GE AND WESTINGHOUSE HAVE BEEN KEPT AWARE OF PRELIMINARY SPECIFICATIONS. FRIER INDICATED SEVERAL OTHER US FIRMS HAVE SHOWN AN INTEREST, I.E., BABCOCK WILCOX, BUT HE WOULDN'T SPECIFICALLY STATE IF NON-US FIRMS WOULD BE INCLUDED IN REQUESTS FOR PROPOSALS. (COMMENT: THE INFERENCE WAS THEY WOULD, BUT FRIER WAS PROBABLY RELUCTANT TO CONFIRM FEARING HE MAY INVOKE EARLY PRESSURES TO BUY AMERICAN. IN TURN FRIER IS A VERY SHREWD AND KNOWLEDGEABLE INDIVIDUAL AND WOULD APPRECIATE THE US EXPECTATION THAT ISRAEL WOULD PROPERLY BUY AMERICAN BECAUSE OF OUR ECONOMIC SUPPORT IN OTHER SECTORS.)

4. BECAUSE OF THE DELAY IN OBTAINING THE CABINET DECISION FRIER STATED THEY PLAN TO CONVENE A COMMITTEE IN THREE WEEKS TO REVIEW IF THEY SHOULD NOW BUILD A NUCLEAR DUAL-PURPOSE PLANT FOR POWER AND DESALINIZATION. WITH THE ACUTE WATER SHORTAGE IN ISRAEL THIS IS A NATURAL CONSIDERATION.

5. ADDITIONALLY, FRIER SAID ISRAEL HAS COMMENCED TO WORK ON THE HADERA SITE (APPROXIMATELY 250 ACRES) FOR A POWER STATION WHICH CAN USE COAL AND OIL (WE UNDERSTAND CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 TEL AV 03045 200827Z

THIS PROJECT IS ALREADY ABOUT ONE YEAR BEHIND SCHEDULE). CONSTRUCTION OF THE FACILITY WHICH WILL HAVE ANNUAL CAPACITY OF 10,000 MILLION KILOWATT HOURS (EQUIVALENT TO TOTAL 1974 ISRAELI REQUIREMENT) PROVIDED BY FOUR GENERATORS WILL START LATE THIS YEAR WHEN THE GOVERNMENT GIVES FORMAL PERMISSION.

6. COMMENT: THE DECISION TO PROCEED WITH THE COAL/OIL CONVERTIBLE FIRED SYSTEM WHICH WOULD HAVE FIRST GENERATOR INSTALLED IN 1979 WOULD INDICATE ISRAELI A) PLANS TO ENSURE HAVING ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES OF MEETING THEIR PROJECTED POWER REQUIREMENTS OR B) IF BOTH NUCLEAR AND THE HADERA FACILITIES WERE COMPLETED

THEN HAVING BOTH FACILITIES WOULD GIVE THEM
MAXIMUM FLEXIBILITY FOR FUEL SOURCES. OF COURSE
ECONOMICALLY TO PROCEED DOWN BOTH PATHS WOULD
PROBABLY BE IMPOSSIBLE SO MOST LIKELY BOTH PROGRAMS
ARE BEING PURSUED AT THIS STAGE AND ONE OR THE
OTHER WILL BE DRASTICALLY CUT BACK OR CANCELED BY
END OF THIS YEAR OR FIRST OF NEXT YEAR.

7. IT HAS BEEN OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT BECAUSE OF
DIFFICULTIES IN RESOLVING SAFEGUARDS ISSUE, US
AGENCIES HAD PRETTY MUCH DECIDED TO PUT CONSIDERA-
TION OF NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS FOR EGYPT AND ISRAEL
ON ICE. IN VIEW OF FRIER'S REMARKS TO US, HOWEVER,
IT SEEMS POSSIBLE THAT WE MIGHT BE CONFRONTED
WITH AN ISRAELI DECISION ON NUCLEAR PLANTS RATHER
EARLIER THAN EXPECTED. WE WOULD WELCOME DEPT'S
VIEWS ON WHAT THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS MIGHT BE,
INCLUDING POSSIBILITY THAT ISRAELIS MIGHT
SERIOUSLY TRY FOR FRENCH PLANT IF THEY THINK
THEY ARE GETTING NOWHERE WITH US.

8. REQUEST EMBASSY BE PROVIDED INFORMATION ON
US PROGRAM FOR NUCLEAR DUAL PURPOSE PLANTS FOR
POWER AND DESALINIZATION AND STATEMENT IF THERE
IS INTEREST IN POTENTIAL JOINT DEVELOPMENT FOR
MUTUAL BENEFIT.
VELIOTES

CONFIDENTIAL

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